

# The Classical Outlook

Continuing Latin Notes

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## EDUCATION ON MT. OLYMPUS

BY MARY A. GRANT

University of Kansas

There are many gaps in our knowledge of the lives of the gods on Mt. Olympus, but none is so great and so lamentable in these days of frenzied curriculum revision as that of their educational system. Of the University of Mt. Olympus not a trace has been found—not a stone of its clubrooms, classrooms, dormitories, or even of the ancient stadium. Catalogs and curricula alike have vanished, and in somewhat patient research I have discovered the name of but a single professor, (a lower rank one at that, I fear), Chiron, who, though chiefly a teacher of mortals, is reported to have instructed Asclepias in the art of medicine. In this extremity we must turn to the finished products of the training, the adult gods themselves, and by a study of their activities and dispositions attempt to reconstruct, as it were *ex pede*, an outline of the Olympian scheme.

If there was systematized training, it was not of the "bread and butter" type, we may be sure, and practical economics had no place in the divine curriculum, even though the doves that brought the ambrosia to Father Zeus may at times have faltered and fallen at the terrible Wandering Rocks, as the Odyssey informs us. But the objectives must have been practical to a great extent, since individual gods presided over different activities, and apparently took the pains to acquire these special skills themselves, instead of merely supervising them, as more indolent divinities might have done. So Athena wove her own garments and those of Hera, Hephaestus fashioned the houses and implements of the gods, Apollo and the Muses furnished the music at formal receptions. The careful Olympian training extended even to the performance of humble household tasks, and the smallness of divine retinues reflects a high regard for the dignity of labor. The gods when Homer was writing, at least, served as valets, maids, cupbearers, and grooms, as many a passage in the Iliad and Odyssey testifies. Only later, in Callimachus' time, under the influence of sophisticated human society, did Artemis think it necessary to have twenty nymphs to tend her hounds and to fill the golden drinking troughs for her teams of deer. And Zeus at no time has a thousand messengers speeding between heaven and earth to bring him news, like Varuna's spies in the Atharvaveda; Iris and Hermes may be sent on special missions, but Zeus himself constantly "turns his shining eyes" to the task.

How this training was administered we can only guess. There are some indications that the gods served apprenticeships in special fields, Hephaestus in the undersea caves of Thetis and Eurynome making necklaces and spiral arm-bands "while Ocean flowed infinite around"; and Apollo tending "crook-horned cattle" for Admetus and Laomedon. But of one thing we can be sure: the training, however acquired, was not put aside and later forgotten. There was no store of

dusty "sheepskins" in Olympian attics, for any day might bring forth a contest in which skill was tested to the uttermost, and the worth of training publicly demonstrated. The gods, like their Greek neighbors below, showed an especial fondness for contests of all sorts, and the records of many of these have been preserved. Sometimes they were in playful mood, as when Apollo and Pan performed on lyre and reed on Mt. Tmolus before a none-too-critical judge, but more often prestige and even possessions depended on the outcome, as in the contest of Athena and Poseidon for the city of Athens. The two gods came, each armed with his accumulated powers, his "thesis" of authority, and had to defend it as vigorously as the candidate for doctoral honors in old universities. In addition to such trials of skill with fellow-gods, there were always the minor but rather annoying contests with ambitious mortals, the Arachnes and Marsyases of human society, whose presumption called for publicizing and punishment.

"Training for citizenship" was no mere phrase, either, in celestial educational circles; for the young Olympian, like his Athenian contemporary, was liable to service in war and the judiciary. The battles described in the Iliad, and Apollodorus' account of the war with the Giants give ample evidence for the former; and for judicial service we may cite the trial of Ares at the Areopagus, when the twelve gods formed the jury, or the contest of Athena and Poseidon already mentioned, when they served in the same capacity. It is interesting to notice that in training for these civic responsibilities no distinctions were made between the sexes. The gods showed advance over the Athenians in this.

The young god was reared, too, in a complicated society to whose laws and conventions he had to become adjusted by long training and experience. We are accustomed to think of divinity as utterly free to conceive and effect its desires; but the Greek gods, perhaps more than those of other nations, were quite strictly held in check, partly by Fate (the Greek Fate seems to have been a peculiarly active one), and partly by their own laws and divine constitution. One god must not encroach on another's domain, or thwart another's interests, or undo what another had done. If his own toes were stepped on, convention dictated that he limit himself to threats for the future, or confine his remarks to polite aposiopesis, as the Sea God did on different epic occasions. He must inquire into the niceties of Fate. He must learn a thousand little limitations and rules even in his dealings with mere human beings; for promises sworn by the Styx were inviolable, and gifts could not be recalled. Even the asking and conferring of immortality was a ticklish business, one where Eos and the Sibyl might well have profited by formal instruction.

We can scarcely imagine any Greek scheme of education without stress on physical development, and there is evidence that the broad Olympian system gave training here, too. Pausanias records that Apollo and Hermes ran at Olympia, and

that Ares and Apollo had a boxing match there; learned Athena, even after her student days, could do "twice sixty double courses" in preparation for the Phrygian beauty contest, as Callimachus informs us. We must include, too, in our theorizing, education-for-leisure-time courses in some finishing school of the Muses in preparation for celestial banquets and dinner darces in golden halls, when Apollo and Artemis led the grand march, and the God of War showed himself as accomplished an artist as any. What a contrast this to the endless brawlings of Valhalla!

But, jesting aside, the final picture of the adult gods is a reasonable one, such as we might expect a Hellenic hand to have drawn. There are no extremes. Zeus may not have the impelling thirst for knowledge of the Norse Odin, who would trade even an eye to gain the wisdom of Mimir, but neither does he

"All alone in gladness dream the joys that throng in space" like the somewhat heavy Eastern divinities whose knowledge is static and absolute. There is no hocus-pocus, either, about the Greek process of learning. In Celtic mythology the eating of the nuts of knowledge confers wisdom; Fafnir's blood gives Sigurd power to understand the speech of birds; Odin drinks the magic mead Othrorir and is straightway eloquent. It is true that the curious tale Hesiod tells of the swallowing of Metis by Zeus may have had some such symbolic meaning, but it was early discarded. Instead, the central theme of the Prometheus trilogy of Aeschylus was probably that of gradually evolving godhead—the representation of Zeus as learning and developing through experience and pain.

The ideal was, in any event, one of normal, well-rounded development, mental, social, physical. We may think that much is at fault on the moral side; yet on the whole the gods are sympathetically drawn, and the many limitations on their powers entailed considerable discipline. Best of all, perhaps, overtraining and pedantry did not dull their spirits or subdue their buoyancy. We still delight to see them, through the eyes of a modern poet, as they stand on Mt. Olympus—

"The thronged gods, tall, golden-colored, joyful, young."

## THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH GRAMMAR TO PUPILS OF LATIN: AN EXPERIMENT

BY C. THURSTON CHASE, JR.

*The Eaglebrook School, Deerfield, Mass.*

So much has been said by Latin and English teachers on questions of precedence and responsibility for the teaching of grammar that at Eaglebrook we have undertaken a solution of our own, which though obviously not startlingly original, may have some merit. The curriculum study of the Secondary Education Board introduces among the ultimate objectives of Latin teaching "those abilities, knowledges, attitudes, and habits which continue to function after the school-study of Latin has ceased":

1. An elementary knowledge of the simpler principles of language structure
  - a. resulting in increased understanding of those elements in English which are related to Latin; and, as a consequence, in improved ability to read, to speak, and to write English
  - b. so applied as to give increased ability to learn other foreign languages

2. A contribution to the establishment of correct mental habits

We believe that Latin can be so taught and related to other intellectual fields that it will develop habits of concentration, accuracy, and clear thinking.

3. A contribution to the pupil's literary appreciation, and to his historical and cultural background

The idea of a general language course is common enough

but frequently such a course has been discarded because it too easily becomes a pathetically superficial and confusing sampling of the sounds, vocabulary, and a few grammatical principles of four or five languages without developing any understanding of the basis of their structure. Most of the general language textbooks seem to be written primarily to assist pupils and teachers to determine the choice of later language study and are open to the criticism of superficiality as a means of achieving the objectives just mentioned. Despite the strong opposition to grammar study in the modern teaching of language, we are still old-fashioned enough to feel that competent understanding and use of any idiom requires a knowledge not only of its superficial aspects but of the skeleton structure, lest by omitting the bony framework we in time reduce the language knowledge of our pupils to the jelly fish stage of the decadent Hawaiian tongue. I realize this premise will have many opponents, but can only state it as the basis of the experiment I am describing.

We felt that the structure of Latin and English might profitably and economically be studied together. The first step was to teach in the sixth grade as many of the simpler elements of English grammar as the class could absorb and apply in composition. Frequently we discovered we could go far beyond mere recognition of parts of speech, kinds of sentences, and simple sentence structure. In the seventh grade, the Latin teacher undertook to teach English grammar as a course by itself, separated from English literature and composition. The one teacher could thus make timely allusions and comparisons between the material of his two grammar courses. The next step was initiated this year—a complete amalgamation of beginning Latin courses for seventh and eighth grades with English grammar. To this one fundamental language course is devoted nine periods a week. We could locate no adequate textbooks, and so have proceeded on the basis of our own outlines which we discover need constant revision. A conventional textbook supplemented by synthetic material of our own making serves for drills and exercises. We anticipate it will take several years' experimentation before we have gathered a body of material that fully meets the needs of this course. We commenced with a cursory outline of the development of human language compared with the development of speech from infancy to maturity. The fact that an outline of world history had been completed in previous grades made simpler the tracing of the development of those languages that had contributed directly and substantially to our own tongue. It goes without saying that in this superficial introduction no attempt of consequence was made to trace Anglo-Saxon or Celtic roots. We then began a laboratory type study of Latin and English as related tongues, capitalizing every useful opportunity for the explanation of similarities, whether in vocabulary or grammatical terminology. The Latin word list of the Secondary Education Board was used as the basis of this study and the corresponding English meanings for classification and study of parts of speech. Pronunciation and syllabification exercises proved to be easily related and to increase clarity when the two languages were compared and contrasted.

Nouns were studied first, simpler case uses of the two languages considered simultaneously, and the Latin forms learned. Only the simplest verb forms of the present tense were used as crutches to support the study of noun structure. In similar fashion, we proceeded in order to adjectives, adverbs, and conjunctions, comparing at each step grammatical procedure of the two languages and leaving the more obscure and difficult relationships for later treatment. It was interesting to see that when the languages were so compared, the boys accepted the Latin as the more logical and basic, and showed considerably greater eagerness to study its structure than that of English. There seemed no adequate way to handle prepositions as a separate classification, and they have been considered piecemeal under the headings of Latin case



uses. The dative, taken as the case of advantage and disadvantage, has been less difficult than anticipated, and the boys claim that the clear presentation of Latin case significance has distinctly helped their understanding of the ubiquitous prepositional phrase in English.

Word order in Latin and emphasis in English loomed large as an obstacle which melted rapidly under direct contrast. The basic conception of a modifier led easily into a discussion of phrase and clause, and contrast illuminated many obscure points, from expletives to retained objects. In the seventh grade the Secondary Board English grammar requirements correspond reasonably well with the requirements for Latin I, but we anticipate some difficulty in the spring term with eighth grade Latin beginners when the grammatical requirements of English III so definitely outstrip the Latin I constructions.

We have as yet no accurate means of evaluating this experiment. We recognize that it will seem reactionary to many and its direct contradiction of the strong current trend may not eventually prove justified. Nevertheless, certain definitely recognizable gains do seem to be evident even when due allowance is made for the rose-colored spectacles of an enthusiast. Boys feel the structural unity of the two languages. They are thinking more and more clearly about the function of language, working less mechanically in both reading and composition.

Perhaps we have made a further step toward an ultimate objective—the establishment of correct mental habits at least as far as they relate to the verbal function, and possibly we may increase the opportunity for objective literary appreciation and historical and cultural background. Most certainly, the English and Latin departments are at peace.

### A TRUE-FALSE TEST FOR BEGINNING LATIN PUPILS

BY MILDRED DEAN

*Roosevelt High School, Washington, D. C.*

*Directions: Draw a circle around the T at the right of every statement that you think is true. Draw a circle around the F at the right of every statement that you think is false.*

1. In oceano habitamus .....T..F.
2. Multa oppida sunt in luna .....T..F.
3. Sol in caelo lucet .....T..F.
4. Annus mille dies habet .....T..F.
5. Amicos nostros amamus .....T..F.
6. Equus duos oculos habet .....T..F.
7. In schola pueros et puellas videmus .....T..F.
8. Magistri semper a ludo absunt .....T..F.
9. Patriam amare debeo .....T..F.
10. Picturas pulchras et statuas magnas facere possum .....T..F.
11. In America arbores semper albae sunt .....T..F.
12. Terra arenam et saxa habet .....T..F.
13. Oceanus multas insulas habet .....T..F.
14. Discipuli sunt semper mali .....T..F.
15. Fabulas de viris claris in schola audimus .....T..F.
16. Europa est insula parva .....T..F.
17. In nostro oppido sunt multae viae .....T..F.
18. Multi viri et multae feminae sunt in nostro oppido .....T..F.
19. In schola nocte manemus .....T..F.
20. Dies centum horas habet .....T..F.

### HAVE YOU TRIED THIS?

*Some New Ideas for Classical Clubs.*

An idea that has been in the editor's mind for a long time is this: Christians base their faith largely upon a document, the New Testament; and that document, as it took form, was written in Greek. Why not read it? The Greek of the New Testament is, in the main, not difficult. A very few lessons in Greek will give one the ability to read some of the

Gospels. The Latin teacher who teaches a Sunday School class might very easily persuade her pupils to learn a little of the language of the New Testament, so that they may read it for themselves. This work may be done in the Sunday School period, or in a weekly meeting at the Latin teacher's home. A Latin teacher, if anybody, can impress her class with the advantages of an original text, as compared with a translation. Besides, she can, if she is skillful, instill in her Sunday School class a pride in achievement and a sense of superiority that may ultimately lead others in her church to a desire to "read the New Testament for themselves." In some schools, this may even be a possible project for the high school classical club.

The editor will welcome other new ideas for club activities.  
L. B. L.

### MUSIC AND SONGS FOR THE CLASSICAL CLUB

The American Classical League Service Bureau has for sale the following. Please order by number:

#### NEW MATERIAL:

Numbering is continued from the April issue. Complete catalogue available for 20 cents postpaid.

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The following material previously published is also available.

103. Five well known Songs translated into Latin. 10 cents.

374. Songs for the Latin Class. By H. C. Nutting. 5 cents.

### CALIGULA AND VERGIL

BY FRANCES REUBELT

*Tulsa, Oklahoma*

(See Suetonius, *Caligula*, 34. Caligula ordered that books by Vergil, and portraits of him, be destroyed.)

The world you would have wicked. Hence your cold,  
Undying hate of Vergil who was good,  
Vergil, who loved his Rome, who understood  
So well to paint her glorious scenes of old,

Who lures and joys of sun and soil retold,  
Keeping of bees, delights of solitude,  
The loves of shepherd youths. For Vergil would  
Life and its beauties, purposes unfold.

Through his great words, madman, you feared, you saw  
Impellings noble, pure, Rome might have learned.  
So Vergil's books, his portraits by your law

In holocausts you wrecked, to ashes burned.  
Now you are dead and dead your loathed decree,  
But Vergil lives, will live eternally.

### NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The American Classical League has just published a four-page folder prepared by the Committee on National Look-out. It is called "The Value of the Classics Today" and consists of brief statements by some thirty prominent educators and laymen. This is just the sort of publicity material that school and college teachers of the classics have been asking for and every such teacher should see to it that copies are displayed on his bulletin board and also placed in the hands of his administrative officers, fellow-teachers, and influential laymen. The price is 2 cents each, postage prepaid in lots of ten or more.

Members and friends of the League, who are planning to attend the Summer meeting of the N.E.A. to be held in Detroit June 27 to July 1 should check the following

sessions. The exact location of each session will be indicated in the general program of the N.E.A.

Monday, June 28, 3 P.M. Round Table discussion under the joint auspices of the American Classical League and the Department of Secondary Education.

Tuesday, June 29, 2 P.M. Open meeting of the League.

Tuesday, June 29, 6 P.M. Subscription dinner of the League.

Wednesday, June 30, 2 P.M. Open meeting of the League.

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ORIGINAL POPULAR LATIN MAGAZINE  
FOR CLASSROOM USE

Dr. Albert E. Warsley, Editor

P. O. Station "S," (Box 54), Brooklyn, New York

The Association for Promotion of Study of Latin (A.P.S.L.) announces the Tenth (10th) Volume Anniversary of its publication of its official organ, the *Auxilium Latinum*, the world's popular Latin Magazine for Classroom and Home, during its 1937-38 (October to May) academic publication cycle. In celebration of this tenth volume anniversary, the *Auxilium Latinum* will come out next Fall with Number 1 of Volume 10 in an enlarged edition of twenty pages (four more than heretofore) and will continue in that number thereafter, as usual, even more full of interesting and popular reading matter and features, all in Latin, in a style about which one reader remarked: "The simplicity of style and elegance of composition are outstanding." About its beautiful cover in color and featuring Caproni Casts, Miss Frances Sabine stated: "I seldom see a cover to a publication as attractive as the one on *Auxilium Latinum*." About its usefulness, Miss Mildred Dean said: "We need *Auxilium Latinum*, for it covers a field not entered by *Classical Journal* or *The Classical Outlook*." *Auxilium Latinum* is edited by a staff of fifteen famed Latinists among whom is your and our Miss Lillian B. Lawler, editor of *Classical Outlook*, whom we offer as our reference. Inquiries about *Auxilium Latinum* may be directed to its Editor, Dr. Albert E. Warsley at the above address, or a year's single subscription may be secured at seventy-five cents with lower rates in bulk lots for students.

